

Oneida County Tourism Meeting Minutes
Oneida Village Inn
October 1, 2013

Present: Lyn Pilch, Kim Baltus, Connie Madden, Sarah Pischer, Skip Brunswick, Romelle Vandervest, Kari Zambon, Bob Martini, Lara Reed

Absent: Diane Hapka

1. **Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order by Connie Madden at 1:40pm.
2. **Approve Agenda** – Motion Baltus/Zambon; motion carried
3. **Approve August Minutes** – Motion Martini/Zambon; motion carried
4. **Treasurers Report** – Connie Madden; there is no report this month because today is the first day of the month and Margie cannot get the books closed out that quickly. Treasurers Report will be tabled until the December meeting.
5. **Invoices** – Connie Madden; One outstanding invoice from Pilch and Barnet. Invoice number 5938 in the amount of \$19,192.49. Motion to approve invoice Reed/Zambon; motion carried
6. **Discuss Meeting Times** – this item no longer needs to be on the agenda
7. **Dates of Future Meetings** – next meeting will be on December 3, 2012 and will be held in Minocqua. Kim Baltus will let us know about the location.
8. **2013 Budget**- we will be presenting the budget next week to the county board and a discussion was held regarding who will be the presenter. After some discussion regarding the time constraints Diane Hapka faces with her new position Kari Zambon and Kim Baltus agreed to do the presentation. Lyn Pilch will provide a bullet list of items for Kari and Kim and Connie will request that we can present in the morning on October 8th or 9th. If we have to present on the 10th Lara Reed will do the presentation. It was asked that any members of the council who can attend the presentation please do.
9. **JEM Branding Grant Update**- Lyn Pilch; the Northwoods of Wisconsin Facebook page has done amazingly well. From August 1 – September 28 we gained 6,300 new Facebook fans. We had 267 new likes per day on average in September. Our click through rate is also very strong at 5%. What this tells us is that people were hungry for The Northwoods of Wisconsin and they are really responding in a great way. Pilch will send more specifics on statistics to the group. The group is also going to set standard meetings on the second Tuesday of the month at the Rhinelander Chamber at 1:30pm for anyone that would like to join us. The personality quiz contest also finished strong and we'll be awarding prizes soon.
10. **Pilch & Barnet Report** – Lyn Pilch; Facebook is cracking down on generic page names so there will be a minor name change to our page so that it is not simply "Oneida County" anymore. It will most likely be "Visit Oneida County or Discover Oneida County". This doesn't change anything except the name. The content will all still be there. Our Summer Snapshots contest resulted in 150 entries, from 11 states and Canada. We have a total of 9,766 votes on the photos as well and there will be winners given weekend stays in the County for four different categories. The photos will be used in the guide as well as our website. The new website launched at the end of August and we saw a jump in visitors to the site in conjunction with the

launch. The next step on the site is adding the lodging component. Which will be open to any and all lodging properties in the county, however it's much easier to take care of those that are members of one of the Chambers. This will be a searchable database based on amenities.

Next Pilch presented the 2013 budget draft. Keep in mind we cannot vote on anything or cut anything until we know the amount of money we are working with from the county. Total budget is for \$100,000 but that does not include the dues money we receive from the partner Chambers. We also might have a couple thousand dollars of roll-over from this year that can be put to next. New things in the budget that stand out would be \$8k for new video footage for a new television commercial campaign, \$2,400 for blogging, and \$2k for a Pinterest page. The other items are pretty standard and things we are accustomed to doing. When the time comes to look at items to cut one place might be our \$1,000 for Lake-link.com, this is a banner ad we do that we don't see much from but supports a good effort in the area. Also, our keyword buys may be able to be reduced thanks to the new website and a higher SEO with that site and finally the last place that could be cut would be \$5,000 for the Travel Guide. This is only if we need to reprint more books next year. A resort tour is included in the budget for next year which the group thinks is a good idea to pick up again. It was suggested to look at doing a tour in Rhinelander in the Spring. Reed said she'd look into it once we have an approved budget. There is no approval on the budget until after the county board meeting.

11. **State Tourism Department Report** – Sarah Fischer; Fischer presented to both the finance committee and full county board since our last meeting. Both presentations went well, especially the full county board presentation. There were good comments and discussion following her presentation. She handed out to items to the group to look over. The first is the 2012 JEM Grant Awards and the second was a report on meetings and conventions in the state. Fischer reminded the group that the next Governor's Council on Tourism meeting will be held on October 18th from 11am to 3pm in Eagle River and everyone that can, should attend. She will also be emailing the group a link to the fall marketing campaign which features Three Lakes in an Ad. The Menomonie Travel WI Visitors Center is now open bringing the total to 8 centers. There was a soft opening held already but they are continuing to add racks and such so don't send any brochures until they contact your business and ask. Remember to update any events on the Extranet by October 19th. "Mittengate" won several awards this past year so we'll be continuing the campaign and collecting items for Mittengate 2.0 so watch for more details.
12. **ITBEC Report** – Kari Zambon; the shows that ITBEC will be attending this year include Canoecopia, Green Bay RV Show and a Fishing Show in February. Watch for sign ups. In addition there was an interesting discussion from the Northwoods Rail Transit Commission regarding the loss of rail lines in the area and the huge impact that will have on the economy. There is a group working on this with strong representation from Oneida County. The Northwoods Tourism Initiative is expected to meet again in October and there will hopefully be reports of progress from the various committees. The group is in the process of a website redesign. Also, a new bill being backed by the state realtors has strong consequences for resorts. The bill would allow homeowners to rent out their homes for any amount of time

without having to following zoning and other regulations. This is not going to benefit anyone but the homeowners.

13. **Grow North & OCEDC Report** – none as no one attended their recent meetings. It was decided to have a signup sheet and for members of the committee to sign up to attend one meeting a year so that we can get an update on what these two groups are doing.
14. **Community Reports** – Connie Madden; A Wausau paper did a three page spread on Snowshoe Softball in Lake Tomahawk. Also, Lake Tomahawk just got a new events sign for the community and it has gone over well.
15. **Public Comment/Communications** – Baltus – Beef-a-rama this past weekend was a huge success as was Harvestfest. Great weather for both events helped. Madden – next year the Snowshoe Baseball League will have the Wounded Warriors play. They are working on raising \$8k to bring the group to Lake Tomahawk.
16. **Items to be included on Next Agenda** – Grow North & OCEDC meetings; President's position
17. **Adjournment** –Motion Reed/Baltus; motion carried. Meeting Adjourned at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara Reed

OCTC Secretary